

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE SECRETARY

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Personal and Private

November 18, 1958
10:45 a.m.MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH
THE PRESIDENT

1. We discussed the Geneva talks about suspension of testing. I reported that I had seen Senator Gore and that as the President had indicated, the substance of his suggestions were not far removed from our own suggestion as to what we would do if the talks broke down. The President said he recognized that we could not adopt the Gore thesis about the danger of contaminating the atmosphere as this was contrary to the thesis we had often expounded. The President said, however, that he had been struck by the phrase of Senator Gore that we would not have "atmospheric" explosions, thus leaving the way open to underground explosions and very high explosions.

2. I reported on the Berlin situation and that it had eased somewhat. I said that the rather extreme views advocated yesterday and the day before by General Norstad and the JCS had been moderated by better understanding of the facts and recognition that we needed to have a better understanding with the British, the French and the Germans before we took a position that might lead to shooting.

The President reviewed at some length his recollection of the history of the Berlin arrangements;

..... However, he recognized that we were where we were and had to stand firm. The President emphasized, however, that we needed to have understanding with the British, the French and the Germans on this matter.

3. I submitted a suggested revised letter to Eric Johnston which the President indicated he would approve.

4. I spoke of Senator Smith's desire to be appointed by the President rather than by me because of fiscal problems. The President indicated his doubt as to the desirability of this. It was agreed that the decision should await the return of Persons and possibly of some of the Republican Leadership

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PORTIONS EXEMPTED

E.O. 12055, Sec. 1-301
NSC 0110 2/22/82
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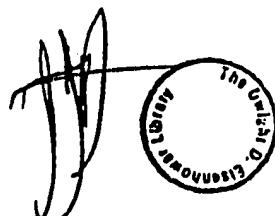
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✓WSR, 5. I reported that Sir Robert Scott, who had been studying the Far East situation, had conferred with me yesterday and had indicated his conclusion that he saw no better policies for the Far East than those that we were pursuing.

6. At this point the President discoursed at some length upon our policy of holding firm until changes would occur within the Sino-Soviet bloc. He felt that these were inevitable but realized that the policy we were following might not be popular. There were some who wanted to give in; others who wanted to attack. The policy that required patience was rarely popular.

✓S/P ✓H (3) 7. The President read the paper prepared on spiritual stimulation. He thought this a very excellent paper. We agreed that the problem of a forum was difficult. The President indicated he might like to do it as a State of the Union message, although probably this would not be practicable.

✓S/P ✓H (3) 8. I reported to the President that Livie Merchant was back on the job as Assistant Secretary for European Affairs and the President expressed his great satisfaction and his confidence in Mr. Merchant.



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